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ABSTRACT

Six evaluations of vocational training (VT) in a territorial context (TC) that were conducted in Italy, France, Portugal, Germany, Great Britain, and Spain were compared for the purposes of constructing a coherent synthesis of the issues developed in them, establishing strategic vectors for the construction of a reference framework for the evaluation of VT in a TC, and producing recommendations regarding support instruments for the evaluation function and its institutionalization. The comparative analysis focused on the following: the TC as an analytical dimension and the diversity of TCs, the institutional context of VT and the dominant relationships between training and development at the regional level, and strategic aspects of the structuring of evaluation processes for VT in a TC. The following actions were recommended: institutionalize social and economic information systems on a regional basis; institutionalize systematic processes of evaluation as a support instrument for planning VT; integrate instruments and measures of VT policy into operational programs oriented toward promoting regional development; and reinforce the evaluation function in a TC (by promoting development of technical evaluation structures at a regional level, promoting development of a network of evaluation experiences, and creating a European training program for technicians of evaluation). (Contains 15 references.) (MN)

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CEDEFOP Document

Evaluation of vocational training in a regional context

A synthesis report

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Evaluation of vocational training in a regional context
A synthesis report

A. Oliveira das Neves
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CEDEFOP has just published the results of a group of studies carried out between 1988 and 1990 on the topic of evaluation of vocational training in a territorial context; these studies represent a critical analysis of the methodological practices observed in the twelve countries of the European Community. They demonstrate the existence of particular approaches irrespective of the response to the objective established with regard to evaluation: to examine the extent to which the training objectives fixed "ex-ante" could be observed in the results achieved "ex-post".

Work on a series of projects on the same topic, between 1990 and 1992, led CEDEFOP to establish an additional objective for evaluation: to contribute to the management of the overall offer of vocational training on a territorial level. In order to go beyond the limits of an evaluation carried out merely in terms of objectives and results, the Centre applied an approach centred on the "mise en oeuvre" dimension, involving the persons and groups responsible for employment and vocational training policies in six different regions. Within the complex framework of a particular region, the intention of strengthening the connection between human resources and development capital presupposes that it evolves for the benefit of ever broader and more closely intertwined spheres of activity, where it is possible to grasp and evaluate the achievements of training.

In this paper the reader will be presented with a brief description of the six regional studies and the reflections emerging from their comparative analysis.

Maria Pierret

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INTRODUCTION

Studies and processes of evaluation usually result from the need to discover the form and degree of success and the usefulness of specific programmes and activities, either from the point of view of the application of various types of resources or simply to test and develop policies and instruments with the aim of realizing previously defined objectives.

This entire complex of evaluation can be placed either within the sphere of activity of organizations managing and applying resources in accordance with their own functions and objectives, or under the control of public authorities, who in several instances are responsible for both the definition of policies and instruments and for the management of their execution. This is, furthermore, one of the lines of separation between projects and training activities for which public or private training bodies are responsible (enterprises, training centres, etc.) and those training programmes and policies for which government vocational training organizations are responsible.

This distinction is also operative in terms of its consequences in the area of evaluation methods going beyond the limited character of practices focusing on a reading of results limited to objectives in favour of activities - more complex, to be sure - which make it possible to complement in their multiple dimensions the processes of design, the development and the effects of vocational training.

The last two decades have witnessed a growing complexity in the (re)shaping of social policies (employment, social insurance and vocational training) in response to the crisis in the "All-providing State" and to the effects of this economic crisis on the growth of public expenditure - more specifically, social expenditure - making it necessary to bring objectives and resources for policy execution in closer line with partnership solutions presupposing a less passive attitude than in the past on the part of the various protagonists and target groups involved. In practical terms, this progressive reduction of the role of the state in the social and economic sphere has gone hand in hand with the call for greater involvement, either of the administrative agents - in their relations with the civil society - or of the social and economic actors called upon to participate, under various modalities, in the formulation and above all in the execution and co-financing of programmes, more specifically in this case of vocational training programmes.

Concurrently with constraints of a financial order, Community directives in terms of employment and vocational training policies - but also in matters of regional policy - have been moving towards greater integration, favouring the development and consolidation of training concepts to be inserted into active life such as training for employment or training for high-risk groups, also linking vocational training to sector-based policies such as, for instance, industrial policy, or inserting it into integrated policies on a territorial basis. This last tendency has witnessed strong popularity, particularly in the 80s in Europe, as a result of the growing reorientation of regional policy and of industrial restructuring policies, in the sense that investment in the creation of vocational skills has been selected as one of the priority instruments for the promotion of regional development, either from the point of view of work-force recycling, or for the creation of new usable skills designed for small and medium-sized enterprises[1].

The development of strategies for the qualification of human resources associated to policies promoting endogenous regional development has also given rise to a growing call for the mobilization of institutional resources on a territorial basis, from non-governmental organizations to development agencies or associations and, of course, training organizations (schools, training centres and enterprises). The possibility of channelling financial resources connected in some way to this type of operation has contributed to the flowering of innumerable activities constituting an interesting and - in a number of cases - innovative test of the connection between vocational training and regional development, also furnishing study material for various researchers and institutions.

Within the CEDEFOP context, this trend has had two phases with different qualitative features:

- first, the project on "Vocational Training and Regional Development", concentrating on the problems of the relationship between these two dimensions and on the forms of complementary activity[2];
- second, the project on "Evaluation of Vocational Training in a Regional Context", focusing on the problems of evaluation and seeking adequate methodological solutions for the examination of vocational training policies on a territorial level.

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1 cf., e.g., DERENBACH, Rolf, "Die humanen Ressourcen und die Förderung der Strukturschwachen Regionen - Strategien und Instrumente", in Formation Professionelle, CEDEFOP, no. 2, 1986.

2 This phase was accompanied by other initiatives having their origins in other Community bodies, for instance the research programme "Formation et Développement Régional en Europe à l'Horizon 1993", promoted by DATAR, Paris (1989/90).

This qualitative evolution is a response to the need to develop instruments assessing the efficacy of public policies in relation to the resources involved and at the same time to the necessity of drawing pertinent conclusions and spreading the experience gained from successful instances. The beginning of evaluation studies based on a territorial context places the CEDEFOP project on the evolution line of evaluation methods as a qualitative jump from methods tested in different project evaluation activities and isolated actions to methods attempting to respond to the challenge of evaluating entire programmes and policies.

The overall structure of this paper, which aims at constructing a coherent synthesis of the issues developed in the context of the CEDEFOP Project[3] - both in the meetings involving the various national teams and in the various national reports - corresponds to the following course of action:

i) first of all, to discuss the methodological aspects and the strategic concepts of the work;
ii) to present the socio-economic typologies and the institutional solutions for training predominant in the configuration of the relationship between vocational training and regional development as observed in the case studies;
iii) to return to the methodological questions in order to establish the strategic vectors for the construction of a reference framework for the evaluation of vocational training in a territorial context;
iv) to produce recommendations in the area of support instruments for the evaluation function and its institutionalization.

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3 The project "Evaluation of Vocational Training in a Regional Context" was run between 1991 and 1992 and involved six mixed investigator teams (universities and consultants on the one hand and local organizations on the other) in the following regions: Basilicata (Italy); Bouches-du-Rhône (France); Caldas da Rainha e Alcobaça (Portugal); Cologne (Germany); Mid-Wales (Great Britain); the Basque region (Spain).
The final reports prepared by the various teams are referred to in the course of this paper and listed in the bibliography. When referring to the project in the text of this paper, we have chosen the term "CEDEFOP Project".

CHAPTER I. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1. Nature of the relationship between vocational training and regional development

Studies focusing on the vocational training / regional development dichotomy are often based on the presupposition of a positive contribution made by the relationship between the two elements of the pair. Without wanting to raise doubts about the basically positive aspect of this relationship, we feel it is important to clarify a number of concepts and to situate this relationship within the diversity of expectations and plans of action of the regional groups involved.

Most authors dealing with this problem tend to adopt a broad definition of vocational training, including in it the entire complex of processes facilitating the development of human resources and relevant vocational qualifications as well as their application within a specific area. This concept deliberately covers functions traditionally located "upstream" from the initial design phase of training programmes, such as identifying training needs, as well as information and vocational guidance activities. From the point of view of the training itself, this includes the complex of activities and initiatives complementing preparation for active life starting from basic education (initial training) as well as formal training activities involving the acquisition of knowledge and vocational skills to reinforce the integration of human resources into economic systems in a condition of permanent change (ongoing training)[4].

This notion of vocational training - and by extension of a vocational training system - allows the integration of training policies and programmes having various targets and objectives: training for youth, training for members of the active work-force, for the unemployed, or sensitizing activities oriented towards, for instance, the creation of enterprises. This question will be taken up again later in the discussion on the reference points of evaluation, starting from the diversity of objectives of vocational training policies, a diversity even larger inasmuch as these policies take on a "package version character" in response to a multiplicity of target groups.

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4 cf., for instance, the paper "Listagem dos conceitos-chave para a compreensao do relatório final do Estudo "Avaliaçao da formaçao profissional num contexto regional"", GEOIDEIA, report for CEDEFOP, 1991.

Once this notion has been established, it is also important to question the relationship between vocational training and regional development taking the following levels of analysis into consideration:

- the diversity of economic contexts;
- the integration of policies;
- the timing of the production of training effects.

i) The diversity of economic contexts

In the context of productive restructuring, where the managerial and human resources to be restructured present strong deficits in terms of qualifications, there is a tendency to assign a prominent role to the training system:

- either of an active nature, to produce qualifications in anticipation of the restructuring process (senior and middle management, specialized technicians, etc., future agents of transformation in an enterprise);
- or of a passive nature, aiming at a response, an adaptation to needs arising from the restructuring process.

If in these processes the value of the contributions of vocational training is immediately apparent as a strongly positive factor in the intentions of policy-makers and in the expectations of the target groups, there are, however, other situations in which the relationship between vocational training and regional development is not so obvious:

- in situations involving particular external economic factors, a deficit in qualifications does not constitute a major obstacle to regional development, especially in the case of economies where insertion depends on the international division of labour and which seek cyclical business possibilities according to comparative advantages arising from low salaries and a fragile organization of labour;
- in certain regions, the economic dynamics of the specialization of production establishes strong pressures on the labour market, accelerating the process of young people without vocational qualifications leaving school early to enter the productive process, enticed by the rapid access to income.

Both examples show that the criteria of economic calculation by companies and the nature of production processes and organization of labour do not always integrate concerns regarding the development of human resources,

and that this does not affect possible positive effects on regional development, as these are for the most part of a cyclical character.

ii) The integration of policies

The effects of vocational training programmes on regional development are not easy to assess, particularly when taking into account two important dimensions of this type of public policy:

> from the point of view of the design of programmes aimed at putting various policies across (either training for employment, vocational retraining or even training for business people), the concerns of designers have evolved in the sense of establishing objectives of convergent character in view of the expectations of the various partners involved or, in some cases, of the need to manage the tensions between the various protagonists and / or target groups through a common setting of objectives within the framework of a same programme, for instance alternance training;
> from the point of view of the mechanisms of transmission of the effects of vocational training (either initial or ongoing) to the socio-productive systems of each region (in terms of improvement of the organization of labour, of vocational performance, levels of productivity,...), these interact with the effects, originating in parallel initiatives with impact on those factors, on the activity of enterprises, initiatives that can be missions of productivity and activities for the demonstration for quality (instruments of industrial policy) or the introduction of factors of technological innovation. These are all elements which, acting in isolation or in conjunction with vocational training, have a impact on entrepreneurial and human resource performance and, ultimately , on regional development, but are difficult to separate in a perspective of isolation of effects.

iii) The timing of the production of training effects

Beyond the observation that vocational training is a dimension which interacts with others developing autonomously within the same economic and regional context, we also see that the production of results based on the social and productive use of qualifications is a process which requires, under normal conditions, long periods of maturation with irregular progress depending on the capacity / possibility of utilizing the skills acquired and in function of the strategic option of enterprises vis-à-vis vocational training.

However, it is also important to take note of contributions made by vocational training which may have a less direct and less immediate connection to a pursuit of qualifications driven by the economic system. In fact, the regional expression of the provision of scholastic and vocational training allows:

- access to vocational training, which constitutes a territorial right of citizens even though access to occupations may occur outside the region and without direct impact on its regional development;
- a response to the vocational training aspirations of young people and other groups within the local population, which feed legitimate expectations of employment in the local economy;
- a response to the pursuit of localization factors on the part of enterprises, which tends to evolve progressively for zones characterized by the availability of qualified human resources and by the presence of training organizations (training centres, universities) and centres of research and development.

The diversity of the situations described here tends to limit the relationship between vocational training and regional development and has even led some authors to locate this relationship just outside the area of interaction between training and economic development.[5]

Irrespective of the significance given to the situations described, most of the case studies carried out within the scope of the Project assigned a positive role to the relationship, and, from this point of view, it is interesting to point out that in CEDEFOP's internal approach to this problem, evaluation is achieved starting from the development of this nuclear relationship.

2. Methodological aspects

The growing complexity of the regional socio-economic environment, on the one hand, and of the entire complex of vocational training, on the other, raises particular problems and a score of other new salient challenges:

- training programmes cease to assume a unanimous relationship between organizers and target groups and start to imply a whole

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[5] cf., namely, CALAIS, Gérard, "Evaluation des Impacts économiques et sociaux de la formation - Enseignements tirés de 4 cas lorrains", in Colloque de Limoges, CEDEFOP, 1990.

complex of protagonists: politicians, officials and technicians, trainers, enterprises and graduates, each with their own role to play;

- the formulation of programmes so as to make them as near as possible to the functions and real needs of the labour market for which they are destined widens the array of protagonists motivated by the perspective of solving their problems or realizing their desires (the case, for instance, of young people in initial training programmes);
- the structures of execution of programmes present a relative territorial diversity in that they accept solutions involving the use of existing equipment and the recruitment of local monitors with multifaceted profiles and training experiences, etc., who noticeably change the pedagogical conditions of execution of the programme contents;
- the financing modalities involve different conditions of management and reproduction of the programmes, in accordance with existing capacities in terms of sectors and territories, and forming the basis of agreements resulting from complex processes of negotiation between the various public or private groups at a central and regional level;
- the production of results is not reliably and immediately measurable in terms of a translation to socio-economic indicators (vocational skills, levels of productivity, etc.) and cannot be isolated from the effects produced in parallel by other programmes and simultaneous actions.

In view of the multiplicity and wealth of these dimensions, the problem of evaluating vocational training needs to surpass the phase where the analysis of actions carried out is limited to the relationship between the objectives defined "ex-ante" and the results observed (thus measurable) "ex-post", an analysis which obviously had to be carried out at the conclusion of the actions and which emphasized the cognitive elements of knowledge and the vocational performances achieved.

Indeed, specialist literature registers a vast array of theoretical and methodological references relative to the problem of evaluating vocational training in which the contributions in terms of pedagogical aspects and effects on trainees / graduates and enterprises abound - in final analysis, a micro-evaluation.

These new approaches to evaluation allow for a contextualization of evaluation using important contributions on mid and macro-levels: the evaluation of training policies as a whole and the evaluation of the sectoral and regional dimension of vocational training.

The combined effect of methodological reflections and the need to follow the regulations of the structural funds of the European Communities, which foresee evaluation "ex-ante" and "ex-post" of Community activities, has led to a more thorough evaluation of vocational training according to two more consistent tendencies:

- one, more traditional and connected to a restrictive interpretation of the needs of Community activities, which develops quantitative and qualitative analyses of situations "ex-ante" and "ex-post" with a view to registering the impact and the efficacy of co-financed actions;
- another, following a series of recent studies carried out particularly on a regional basis, which aims at associating the evaluation function to the design and management of programmes and which also incorporates efficacy criteria.

Relative to the first trend, the most frequent criticisms tend to uncover a whole complex of limitations:

- the difficulties of identifying the objectives of vocational training "ex-ante" without a thorough knowledge of the socio-economic and territorial contexts;
- the shortage of "ex-ante" evaluations, making impracticable the comparison of results between the situation at the start and the results found out in "ex-post" evaluations;
- the unsatisfactory character of information systems supporting "ex-ante" and "ex-post" analyses;
- the impossibility of considering the institutional and socio-economic environments within which the results of the training actions were produced and which frequently condition the nature and range of the effects produced;
- a reasoning centred on the "objectives / results" dichotomy presupposes defined and stable units of analysis, not subject to exterior influences, which is far from being the case with training bodies.

The initial formulation of objectives of this CEDEFOP project, to place evaluative studies within the context of the relationship between vocational training and regional development, places the evaluative exercise in an area closer to the real motivations of the actors and the concrete processes of execution of the programmes, allowing to grasp the dynamics of interaction between the socio-productive systems and the policies and instruments of vocational training, as well as the modes of real interaction between the supply of and demand for qualifications.

The affirmation of an interactive logic in the evaluation of vocational training presupposes an open vision of the relationship between training and development taking into consideration the diversity of territorial contexts, the plurality of actors and the institutional characteristics associated to the development of the policies and programmes of vocational training.

Indeed, the production of qualifications and their social and economic utilization form a link between two sub-systems whose individual internal processes of decision-making are at the origin of particular expressions of supply of and demand for qualifications implying a relationship of conflict and cooperation, either at on an internal or external level.

Chart 1
Relationship between the economic sub-system and the vocational training sub-system

Regional context

Economic sub-system	Training sub-system
• productive structure • dynamics of the entrepreneurial system • function of the labour market • modalities of employment management • effective demand for training	• vocational training sub-system • provision of scholastic and vocational training • programme contents and curricula • structures and mechanisms of cooperation on a regional scale • strategies of institutions

Regional context

Grasping the entire complexity and wealth of the dimensions intertwined in the two sub-systems requires interactive evaluation. As signalled by the report of the Basque team participating in the CEDEFOP Project, "... the internal complexity of the two sub-systems themselves must be added to the complexity of the relationship between human resource policies and the dynamics of regional development (understood as two sub-systems having a relative degree of autonomy)".[6]

6 IKEI - Insituto Vasco de Estudios e Investigación e I+D - Información y Desarollo, Evaluación del impacto de los programas de formación profesional a nivel regional - Informe final provisional, April 1992.

In this perspective, the systemic approach suggested as a theoretical frame of reference in the initial "appel d´offres" of the Project seems appropriate enough in relation to the objectives of the study. For this reason it was adopted by various national teams as a theoretical frame of reference to explore and explain the relationship between vocational training and regional development. The fundamental characteristics of the systemic analysis, as presented by the British team[7], are the following:

- dynamic, allowing to discover the control and development process of the overall regional training system, its form of organization and its modes of interaction;
- contextualized, allowing to frame the processes occurring in the training system as a result of the responses of actors to the various challenges facing them either from external sources (decision-making centres) or from the regional socio-economic environment;
- having sub-systems, allowing to integrate in the evaluation process the micro-units of analysis that can represent networks of organizations and actors indispensable to understanding the interactions transcending the formal institutional limits;
- identifying various interests, allowing to perceive the existence of different values within the system according to diverse visions and targets in terms of training; the perception of these values, as of the interests involved, is indispensable for the formulation of evaluation criteria.

These key characteristics of a systemic approach constitute a useful instrument in view of the desire to provide solid responses, on a methodological plane, to the need to contextualize the relationship between training and development and to grasp the diversity of interests and values involved, particularly the evolution of the scholastic and vocational training sub-systems in their search for solutions approximating the expectations of the socio-entrepreneurial system through a diversification of the supply. This attempt to meet objectives and interests manifested by the various cells of the economic sub-system is a trend leading to a wider network of units and institutions involved in supplying vocational qualifications (teaching organizations responsible for the design of policies and training programmes, training centres, guidance counsellors, trainers, enterprises with training capacities, etc.), a widening accompanied by the development of cooperative solutions on a regional basis mobilizing a diversity of actors with differing expectations and degrees of involvement and with different logics of regional

7 The TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, The evaluation of training human resources and regional development in rural Wales - Final report, 1992.

integration and complicated by the fact that a major part of activities and training programmes are integrated into activities for the promotion of development.

In this context, the problem of evaluation ceases to be solvable with a simple recourse to traditional methods of evaluation of results and evaluation of operating modalities of training programmes and begins to presuppose the pursuit of interactive types of methods which guarantee a synthesis of the diversity of perspectives and objectives with which the various social and institutional actors intervene in training activities. These two methodological postures are presented in the following chart, which was prepared by the British team participating in the CEDEFOP Project.

Chart 2
Principles and Institutional Framework of Evaluation

	Framework	Evaluation issues	Evaluating unit
Evaluation of results	Relatively independent training units; stable environment	Degree of execution of objectives and goals	External
Implementation	Integrated training units; relative interdependence; changing environment	Modalities of training programme coordination and management	External (with participation and cooperation of actors)
Interactive evaluation	Interdependent training units; environment in permanent change	Deduction of a group of values (construction of criteria)	Participatory and cooperative evaluation

Source: taken from the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE ..., op. cit. p. 18 (EN).

The third block of the chart shows a second path suggesting a few practical contributions which, in our understanding, constitute a good point of departure for the construction of a method of evaluation allowing to grasp the multi-dimensional character of the problems described:

- it considers the training units (Training Centres and training programmes) as interdependent units subject to interferences from external factors, namely economic units (the market, enterprises, technologies, the labour market, etc.) in permanent change;

- it considers the existence of a framework of values constituted from a number of interests expressed by the actors involved in the relationship between supply of and demand for vocational training; this framework of values, developed from the visions and aims attributed to the design of the programmes, to their execution and financing, is an essential factor for the construction of evaluation criteria;
- it considers that the process of evaluation must be active and involve those responsible for the definition of objectives, for the set-up of the training activity, for the financing solutions.

This last aspect begs reconsideration of the objectives of evaluation in the direction of the second tendency mentioned before, which aims at linking the evaluative function to the very design and management of the programmes, a point made, for example, in the Basque report within the scope of the CEDEFOP Project: " ... evaluation cannot be limited to being an instrument to determine efficacy and / or failure "a posteriori": indeed, it has its place just as much in the phase of the definition of objectives and strategies as in the phase of development and implementation of the programmes constituting, thus, a central element of planning and decision-making".[8]

This is a new approach to the problem of evaluation; it is starting to gain followers in various areas, particularly among planners of vocational training on a regional level, as it provides techniques and methods of support to assist in decision-making, thus contributing to the reduction of the uncertainty associated with this planning.

Without attempting to become a substitute for evaluation in terms of "results" and "mise en oeuvre", interactive evaluation represents a method of evaluation approximating the processes of applied social research[9] with three fundamental axes of operation:

- to consider the definition of objectives and programme design as evaluation material, which means transporting the process of evaluation to the fundamental aspects of the training activities and of resource planning; from this point of view, evaluation can be transformed into a useful instrument for the reformulation of objectives and the correction of programme contents;
- to consider the various actors involved in training, in a relationship of producer / user, as being potentially interested in the evaluation process, transforming this process into an operation which takes into

8 IKEI, op.cit., p. 6 (ES).

9 LIPARI, Domenico, "La valutazione delle azioni pubbliche", Il Progetto, no. 49, 1989, Rome.

consideration more than only the decision-makers and programme managers; from this point of view, evaluation can be transformed into an instrument producing separate flows of information and useful for management functions;

- to consider a variety of working methods: of a quantitative nature, to explore statistic information on a regional and national basis; of a qualitative nature, to explore the cooperative potential among actors and the very logic of their participation as protagonists in the relationship between vocational training and regional development.

CHAPTER II. THE TERRITORIAL CONTEXT: RULES GOVERNING DEVELOPMENT AND FORMS OF INTERVENTION

1. The territorial context as an analytical dimension

The multifaceted nature of the relationship between vocational training and regional development broadens when investigators - and government policy planners - are confronted with the variety of territorial contexts in which the vocational training and the economic sub-systems evolve. Not only is this the terrain in which this Project unfolds: it is above all the interface between the two sub-systems, where the expression of interests and the development of conflicts (specifically, tensions exerted on the labour market) have free rein and where adjustments can be made between supply of and demand for qualifications, even though recruitment of human resources operates on a supra-regional level as a result of geographic mobility.

The importance of territory and of the socio-economic characteristics which make up a territory's image in relation to other areas justifies, then, a prior understanding of regional concepts and regional development. Here too - as in the case of the concept of vocational training - the case studies have adopted a broad definition, which is not always sufficiently explained in the various reports.

With regard to the concept of region, which we admit was significant for the selection of the geographic areas for the case studies, independently from their size, a number of requirements should be fulfilled to permit the study of levels and modalities of relationship between training and development, on the one hand, and to establish a coherent frame of reference for the evaluation of vocational training. Among these requirements, the following stand out:

- historical and cultural identity;
- homogeneity of the conditions for the mobilization and utilization of human resources;
- presence of a diversified array of public organizations involved in the provision of scholastic and vocational training;
- existence of a system of government organizations or associations involved in the area of regional development;
- ongoing cases of cooperation affecting training and / or development.[10]

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[10] This formulation of requirements closely follows the presentation of the report of the Portuguese team participating in the CEDEFOP Project: A formacao profissional e o desenvolvimento da regiao de Alcobaça e Caldas da Rainha, GEOIDEIA e AIRO, 1992.

When talking about the concept of regional development, we must note a vast disparity of perspectives in addition to the expectations and desires of the various social and economic actors for the region where they live and exert their activity. The frames of reference along social and economic lines and the availability of infrastructural support for economic activity are predominant and on par with a broader concern with the problem of economic internationalization.

In fact, the behaviour of regional economies depends more and more on the evolution of external factors, and this opening to the outside in the context of regional competitiveness constitutes one of the essential factors on a national and international level for the intensification of lasting processes of development taking into account the utilization of the endogenous potential of each region. This approach to development presupposes an integrated vision to the extent that it must include the diversity of mechanisms which interact in a particular territory (socio-cultural, economic and institutional, etc.) with the aim of promoting capacity for growing social innovation on the part of the social and institutional actors in each region. In this context, vocational training is called upon to play a dynamic role with characteristics of both adaptation and active adjustment through the transmission of stimuli to the economic subsystem, anticipating new qualifications which have become essential for the evolution of technologies and the forms of labour organization.

A last aspect with regard to conceptual clarification involves the duality observed at the level of institutions, where situations oscillate between politico-administrative decentralization, with regions having attributes and areas of jurisdiction of their own in terms of vocational training, and centralization without a stable framework of politico-administrative regions (the case of Portugal). This duality shapes a very special framework with regard to the promotion of regional development and the territorial autonomy of training policies, which will be analysed in the following chapter.

2. The diversity of territorial contexts

On a territorial level, the intertwinement of the dimensions of vocational training and regional development faces a variety of socio-economic situations evidenced by the case studies, either in the first-phase reports, devoted to the characterization of the regional environment, or subsequently, in the final reports describing the connection between this environment and the training system.

At first view, what can be seen is a rather diverse array of regional development situations going from urban to rural zones; from declining to expanding areas; from regions undergoing industrial reconversion to regions of new industrial settlement. This can be expected in view of the high number of national cases under study, the diversity of outset situations and the social and institutional systems present in each case.

Upon closer observation, however, the search for regularities in the problems and the desire to find points in common lead to the identification of a group of typical situations according to the predominant factors involved. Within this common group, a number of comparisons will be possible between distinct modes of development and social structures and modalities of cooperation based on different areas own strategies.

Without intending to utilize the six national cases studies[11] exhaustively for the construction of typical situations, but aiming above all at identifying a number of different territorial contexts operating similarly with regard to institutional solutions for vocational training problems, we have attempted to formulate a typology of regional socio-economic situations according to the following criteria:

1) the emergence of crisis situations (where typical cases are associated either to regions of declining productive mono-specialization or to processes of economic reconversion on an industrial basis);

2) the reinforcement of trends of opening to the outside (where typical cases are associated to strongly extrovert regions suffering from the impact of the implementation of the Single European Market and undergoing processes of reorganization of their comparative advantages);

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[11] In a few of these studies, particularly in the report by the Mid-Wales team, a number of examples are studied individually.

3) the installation of new investment (where typical cases are associated to the move of large industrial units to regions without previous industrial tradition).

These typical situations are described in point 2.1..

This socio-economic typology must, however, be seen in the context of two analytic dimensions which are strongly complementary in the logic of the relationship between vocational training and development of the regional framework:

- the concrete demand for training arising from the various socio-economic situations and then transmitted to the various components of the training sub-system (point 2.2.);
- the network of actors involved in the reference territory, mobilizable in a perspective of promotion of development according to their framework of interests and the existing and expected modalities of connection (point 2.3.).

2.1. Typology of socio-economic situations

2.1.1. The emergence of crisis situations

This group of socio-economic situations includes two distinct trends:

i) Processes of industrial reconversion

These are above all examples linked to the structural crisis of strategic industrial sectors affected by breakdowns in internal and external demand and by the drop in prices, which makes national production less competitive.

A number of cases which have been studied belong to this group, such as:

- the closure of the nuclear power station at Transfynydd (Mid-Wales), which had directly employed 600 persons, mostly highly qualified staff (but whose qualifications were difficult to transfer) with high levels of salary in a rural crisis region where nearly three thousand persons (one in four members of the active workforce) depend directly or indirectly on the existence of the power station; resistance to mobility, either professional or geographic, increases the gravity of the crisis resulting from the elimination of jobs;[12]

12 cf. Report of the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, op. cit., p. 51-59 (EN).

- the intense sectoral restructuring (since 1977) in the Basque region, with a reduction of productive capacity accompanied by drastic drops in employment levels, particularly in the metal, rubber, automotive parts and wood pulp sectors; more recently structural weaknesses have been accentuated, above all as a result of the productive specialization profile centred on those industries and through the absence of productive investment into sectoral diversification;[13]
- the reconversion processes in the CIOTAT employment basin and the closure of the Bouches-du-Rhône shipyards, linking the traditional aspects of reconversion of port areas involved in naval construction and repair to the strong density of foreigners with special social and economic insertion problems, particularly in the city of Marseilles.[14]

ii) Rural areas in decline

This involves particularly the regions of Basilicata and Mid-Wales, which combine the general aspects characterizing this type of region: peripheral areas with appreciable indices of sub-development and marked by low population density, an ageing population, high unemployment rates resulting from the structural transformations in the agricultural sector and the lack of alternative employment in other areas of activity.

The case studies conducted by the teams involved point to the onset of relatively distinct processes of socio-economic recovery:

- small-scale initiatives connected to the exploitation of natural resources (specifically, promoting high-quality regional food products and reactivating tourism on a historico-cultural and natural basis, as exemplified in one of the case studies of the British team);[15]
- government investment plans in industrial sectors undergoing restructuring, aiming at improving yield in production and labour, together with long-term agreements between enterprises involving access to new technologies, products and markets;[16]
- the promotion of industrial investment in rural crisis areas, combining various forms of support: infrastructure, capital resources, managerial skills (production, marketing, etc.), development of human resources; this type of intervention, beyond the aspects of job creation and improved results, also aims at reviving the economic base through the diversification of activities of strategic importance for the recovery of

13 cf. IKEI e I+D report, op. cit., p. 11/12 (ES).
14 cf. CIRSE report (FR).
15 cf. Report of the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, op. cit., p. 47-51 (EN).
16 cf. IKEI e I+D report, op. cit., p. 12 (ES).

rural areas where the decline of traditional activities causes serious problems in terms of keeping populations in their original local communities;[17]

- the development of social intervention mechanisms oriented towards the support of high-risk groups (young school-leavers, long-term unemployed, foreigners, illiterates, nomads, etc.) and which link the creation of jobs in appropriate vocational areas to financial support for cultural and humanitarian associations involved in assistance towards social insertion and the organization of literacy programmes and initial qualification programmes;[18]
- support for ongoing training for the unemployed and members of the active workforce lacking scholastic or vocational qualifications, starting from a restructuring information and vocational guidance instruments; this is above all the situation in the case study of the Cologne team, linked to the profile of the functions of a guidance cell for ongoing training destined to counsel specific target groups and to promote institutional cooperation for literacy and ongoing training.[19]

2.1.2. The reinforcement of trends of opening to the outside

The existence of strongly extroverted economic structures (with a high level of exports) having high indices of productive specialization presents great challenges to regional economies at a time when the implementation of the Single European Market is taking shape and when competition is increasing between enterprises and regions with competitive factors undergoing permanent adjustment, also keeping in mind the pressure exerted by other producers who are not integrated in the Community context and have comparative social advantages supported by modern factors (technology, management modalities, high-scale economies, etc.).

A few of the regions studied exemplify this situation:

- the Basque region, where gradual integration into the Community has had the (negative) short-term effect of reducing the export capacity and increasing the dependency of the Basque economy on the Spanish

17 cf. Report of the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, op. cit., p. 63-66 (EN).
18 cf. CIRSE report, op. cit., p. 55 (FR).
19 SCHIERSMANN, Ch. et al., Weiterbildungsberatung im regionalen Bezugsfeld - Eine Analyse von Kooperationsstrukturen, final report for CEDEFOP, 1992.

market as a result of the breakdown in prices and intense competition to which were subjected such sectors as the metal industry, tool machines, electric household appliances, tanning, etc., at a time of stagnating world demand;[20]

- the Alcobaça and Caldas da Rainha region (Portugal), with an over-specialization in the area of porcelain, pottery and stoneware manufacture, (activities which account for approximately one third of industrial employment); high dependency on European markets, after full integration, will lead to the loss of the competitive advantages derived from protectionism (with the arrival of foreign economic groups wanting access to natural resources and to the industrial tradition) and to a tenuous enrichment of the production range, together with the proliferation of closure of enterprises and elimination of jobs.

In these cases, the economic responses attempted so far have oscillated between a more aggressive attitude in terms of the implementation of instruments supporting industrial restructuring (as in the case of the Basque region, described in 2.1.1.) and a more passive attitude, allowing market mechanisms to operate freely (as in the case of Alcobaça and Caldas da Rainha).

From this point of view, instruments of industrial policy have been manipulated in quite different ways:

- anticipating processes of entrepreneurial and vocational reconversion in one case (where, however, the presence of a strong state entrepreneurial sector gives the government greater social and economic responsibilities and facilitates intervention based on the protection of enterprises);
- postponing the production of structural effects under the pretext of a vision of industrial policy which intends to leave to economic agents the onus of finding solutions to entrepreneurial and employment problems (in a context where entrepreneurial initiative is exclusively private).

2.1.3. New investment

This type of situation basically consists of cases connected with the installation of new enterprises, either as a result of industrial relocation within the framework of the development of strategies of large enterprises seeking more favourable location factors, or on the basis of processes promoting

20 cf. IKEI e I+D report, op. cit., p. 13-14 (ES).

entrepreneurial initiative focusing on stimulating the creation / settlement of small and medium-sized enterprises.

In the case studies we can identify two examples belonging to this typology:

- the possible relocation of a large industrial unit from the automotive sector to the Basilicata region, with the impact this would have on a labour market characterized by an excess of employable workers, most of them unskilled, together with unemployed university graduates; state subsidies promoting the regional improvement of this part of southern Italy, in conjunction with the existence of a plentiful workforce, constitute potential location factors for an investment controlling several thousand direct jobs as well as indirect effects bound to have a strong regional impact;[21]
- sources of new entrepreneurial initiatives contributing to the correction of either the low level of sectoral diversification of regional economies (which constitutes one of the major identifiable obstacles, for instance in the Basque region and in Alcobaça and Caldas da Rainha), or the lack of economic initiative in areas characterized by the decline of traditional activities (examples of which were described in the reports on Mid-Wales and Basilicata).

This last process is based primarily on the mobilization of endogenous capacities, but its degree of success is almost always associated to potential for market penetration on the part of small-scale enterprises based on individual cooperative initiatives. The youth of most of these enterprises, the organizational weaknesses which they frequently exhibit and the less favourable market evolution have complicated their consolidation. However, the demonstration effect successful experiences (particularly in the area of innovation, corporate services and exploration of economies of scale and networks) can have on the regional environment more than justifies the various types of stimuli that could be channelled into such initiatives (risk capital funds, technological resources, support for human resources qualification measures, recruitment incentives, etc.).

21 A.S.FORUM, Valutazione dell´impacto della formazione professionale nell´ambito territoriale della regione Basilicata, report for CEDEFOP, 1992.

2.2. Socio-economic contexts and modalities of training

The diversity of the economic dynamic forces which we have identified presupposes a varied range of interventions in the area of regional development, originating as much in activities of macro-economic and mid-economic character (primarily measures of sectoral and regional policy), as in policies of vocational training, the area we have focused on.

The following chart, based on four types of socio-economic contexts, identifies a few measures characteristic of sectoral and regional intervention for the promotion of development and, at the same time, identifies the modalities of training most often associated to the economic environments referred to.

Chart 3
Regional development and forms of intervention

TERRITORIAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXTS	FORMS OF INTERVENTION Sectoral and regional policies	Offer of vocational training
1. Processes of industrial re-conversion	• restructuring programmes w/investment by the public sector • incentives for industrial di-versification • incentives for foreign invest-ment • social insertion programme for high-risk groups	• special training for high-risk groups • training for vocational re-conversion • training for the creation of enterprises • training for adaptation to new technologies
2. Rural areas in decline	• reinforcement of infrastructure and accessibility • promotion of local products • support for the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises	• initial training (training of youth involved in the creation of activities) • training for the creation of enterprises • sensitization training
3. Stronger opening to the outside	• acceleration of processes of entrepreneurial reconversion, with state support or according to the laws of the market • harmonization of production and quality standards • development of distribution networks • incentives for foreign invest-ment with innovative character • stimulus for the development of corporate agreements (subcontracts, royalties, ...)	• vocational retraining • management training (pro-duction, marketing, human resources) • training for new manufacturing technologies and new products • training for new technologies • foreign language training • large-scale initial training • training for information on markets
4. New estab-lishments	• incentives for the establish-ment of new industrial units - infrastructured properties - tax subsidies - employment bonuses • direct negotiation with large enterprises	• training for the creation of enterprises • training for middle and senior management • ongoing training for the improvement of skills and qualifications

This exercise attempts to register in a coherent manner a philosophy in which the different training modalities are viewed as solutions of adaptation / adjustment to different socio-economic dynamic forces which, from our point of view, require specific training responses; these responses, however, are always multiple responses to the extent that each socio-economic reality has in its territorial context providers and target groups of vocational training with differing interests and different ways of exploiting vocational qualifications. Examples of this are young people's expectations of insertion in active life (a reflection on the attractiveness of the various components of this offer of training) and the corporate options in terms of vocational training, which are in strong contrast to each other, with some enterprises having their own development policies for human resources and others paying little attention to this component and maintaining their distance vis-à-vis vocational training.[22]

The analysis of Chart 3 demonstrates the existence of training needs cutting across rather distinct socio-economic contexts, needs which the majority of training systems must respond to (independently from the more or less centralist pattern which characterizes them). In this case, these needs are training for the creation of enterprises, training for adaptation to new technologies, and training for vocational reconversion. At the same time, some socio-economic contexts are more exacting in terms of the training responses they require: this is the case of regional economies exposed to market competition in the implementation phase of the Single European Market, economies which manifest demand on various fronts, either in initial training or in ongoing training, responding to the need to improve human resources at the base (jobs in production and / or services), at intermediate levels (middle management) and at the top (senior management and corporate leaders).

2.3. Typology of actors

A determining aspect of the relationship between vocational training and regional development, where there are strong disparities between the various studies, is the institutional support system, i.e. the network of actors involved

22 We can quote, as an example of this, the frequent references of the Portuguese team's report placing the problem of the relationship of enterprises to training at a higher level, i.e. in the (in)capacity of enterprises to identify training needs and consequently to direct demand to the various components of supply. Cf. Report of GEOIDEIA e AIRO, op. cit., pg. 24 ff (PT).

and / or mobilizable as partners / protagonists for the promotion of regional development on the one hand and for the formulation and interpretation of policies of vocational training for the region on the other hand.

The analysis of the various studies suggests a typology of actors / protagonists in three large groups according to the nature of the bodies involved:

- bodies intended to be instruments of promotion of regional development;
- bodies with a large range of areas of intervention having a direct or indirect impact on regional development;
- organizations of scholastic or vocational training with the participation of local / regional partners, according to the modalities of participation;
- other bodies, a relatively hybrid group including above all the enterprises as agents of development affecting and managing resources, a distinction having to be made between enterprises hardly making use of training and those which have training mechanisms of their own and organize training activities either for themselves or for the labour market.

This level of analysis shows the vitality of the institutional resources for development and the possibility of promoting modalities of cooperation, starting from processes of negotiation between the occasionally conflicting interests involved. Tradition and previous experience in politico-administrative decentralization is an important element of differentiation between the regions under study, specifically in terms of the quality of the levels of participation which the actors involved can bring about, as can be seen in Chart 4.

Most of the case studies do not systematically identify the actors involved except in the case of the Mid-Wales report which represents, in fact, one of the extremes of the strongly contrasted situation at this level of analysis, given the existence in the region of a varied network of development agents:

- in the political area: county councils and district councils;
- in the area of promotion of development: development agencies (two);
- in the area of promotion of economic activity: local agencies for the creation of enterprises, tourist office, regional office;
- in the area of training: councils for "training and enterprise".

These various units pursue their activities either in the area of services to customers (information, consultancy, marketing, etc.), directly or as sub-contractors, or through participation in work groups, associations and partnership agreements.[23]

At the opposite pole we see, for instance, Alcobaça and Caldas da Rainha (Portugal), where in addition to a system with a scarce number of cells, we have a situation where these cells are very backward in their development and have a minimal degree of interaction, the actors involved playing a mostly passive role (users).

23 cf. Report of the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, op. cit., p. 76 (EN).

Chart 4. Forms of participation of local institutions according to their intended use and nature

	Nature / Institution	Type of Involvement	Modalities of cooperation
Units created specifically for the promotion of regional development	Development Agencies (MW)	Central role	Work groups, associations, partnership agreements
Units with large-scale intervention with direct or indirect impact on regional development . (in the political area) . (in the economic area)	County and district councils (MW) Municipal chamber (CR) Autonomous government (BR)	Formal participation	Consulting council Provision of equipment and facilities
	Entrepreneurial associations (CR) Agencies for the creation of enterprises (MW)	Participation Participation Organization of training actions	Sensitization and spread of information Partnership agreements
Organizations for scholastic or vocational training	Training centres Regional government (BR) Counselling cells for ongoing training (C)	Promotion Organization of training activities	Shared management (state /entrepreneurial associatons) Sensitization and spread of information
Other units (enterprises using / providing training)	Consulting offices Enterprises with training capacities	Promotion /Organization of trining activities Participation (e.g., alternance training) Utilization	Inter-corporate cooperation Cooperation with training centres Practical stages in technical and vocational courses

N.B. The letters in brackets refer to the case study where the situation described occurs: Basilicata (B), Bouches-du-Rhône (BR), Caldas da Rainha and Alcobaça (CR), Cologne (C), Mid-Wales (MW), Basque region (BR). Where occurrence is generalized, no case study is mentioned.

CHAPTER III. TRAINING SYSTEM AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

1. The institutional context of vocational training

The previous chapter attempted to demonstrate the extent to which the various social and economic regional contexts set the margins of adjustment between the economic sub-system and the scholastic and vocational training sub-system, in an exercise of approximation / imbalance between the supply of and demand for qualifications. However, the institutional framework of training systems also conditions their capacity for response and the modalities of action of the various components on the supply side of training at a regional level. As a matter of fact, this is a constraint which affects not only the degree of decentralization of the vocational training units, but also the financing of programmes and activities, a consequence of the web of relationships historically constructed between enterprises and government-run training activities.

The existence of genuine regional systems of vocational training presupposes above all the existence of a number of fundamental requirements on the demand side: objective needs for training in terms of the volumes of persons to be trained and the vocational variety required; sufficient socio-economic dynamism to feed a sustained demand for training; organizational capacity in terms of logistics and of the potential to recruit trainers; a network of institutional relationships bringing together the main actors and clients of the training system; adequate financial resources that are already available or can be tapped to finance training programmes and activities.

Parallel to this but from a strictly institutional point of view, the point of view of the source of power, the existence of organs of regional authority with global administrative attributes and competences functions as a determiner for the existence of either regional training systems or more or less structured extensions of a national system. Except in more advanced cases of transfer of competences, in terms of curriculum planning and management of vocational training for the regions - the paradigmatic example of which can be found in the French system[24] - there are central aspects which depend on the predominance of the national over the regional level and which can be observed with more or less prominence in the majority of European countries where " ... regional powers do not determine the totality of the financial or

24 cf. the legislation of 1966 and 1971, which created the Regional Delegation of Vocational Training to manage public resources earmarked for training, which transformed the regional dimension into the cornerstone of the French system of vocational training.

technical instruments installed in the territory", as has been observed, for example, in a previous CEDEFOP study.[25]

Financial constraints do not favour the organization of actions resulting from regional logics, even though from an institutional point of view principles of regional curriculum planning and management may be guaranteed. It is in this context that the development of forms of coordination between the government organizations involved in the training system, the enterprises and other local organizations active on the training / development interface represents a "sine qua non" condition for the development of regional training options; otherwise regional curriculum planning might become nothing more than the regional expression of objectives quantified on a national level and the establishment in a particular area (in the regions) of the training activities and measures conceived for the country as a whole.

In view of this scenario, which outlines the difficult course of regional autonomy where training is involved, what we propose to do in this chapter is try to identify the main regional logics of the training function, starting from aspects of initial design, curriculum planning and financing and going on to organizational solutions and complementary measures, also dealing with the modalities of cooperation which support the regional expression of training systems.

2. Profile of dominant relationships between training and development at a regional level

Reading the various case studies reveals the existence of the following typical situations:

i) vocational training systems with a high degree of interaction with the features of the regional socio-productive system, guaranteeing satisfactory levels of response and adjustment to the necessities of demand for qualifications (e.g., Mid-Wales and Bouches-du-Rhône);

ii) vocational training systems with a high degree of elasticity for adjustment in terms of both the autonomy of the regional supply and the relationship they maintain with the central level (e.g. Cologne and the Basque region);

25 Développement régional et formation professionnelle - Mise en valeur des ressources humaines dans des régions en reconversion économique bénéficiant d'appuis financiers communautaires, CEDEFOP, Berlin, 1982.

iii) vocational training systems with a high degree of centralization in the areas of design, curriculum planning and financing, and where regional extensions tend to reproduce national logics - be they generalist or sectoral - without incorporating aspects of a regional nature into curriculum planning (e.g., Caldas da Rainha); in this case, problems existing in the area of demand for qualifications increase with the deficient manifestation of training needs.

Ultimately, this typology shows a broad range of levels of autonomy and decision-making power on a regional scale, and these levels are then interpreted by the various social, economic and institutional actors involved on this scale. The forms of development of this autonomy, the modes of intervention in the various activities / functions involved are the factors which give life and structure to a training system; we will be examining these factors in the following lines.

i) Design of training

Just as there is no systematic practice of integrating vocational training in the instruments, measures and activities of regional development at the planning stage of regional policies, there are few occurrences of concerns of a regional nature in the planning stages of the formulation of vocational training policies.

Essentially, the design of programmes subject to local management and execution, in systems with territorial autonomy, corresponds to the development of policy options, above all in the areas of employment, vocational training and insertion of young people into active life, options which come across in the design of training activities (alternance training, "crédit formation individualisé, training for active workforce, etc.) of universal application financed with public or private funds, originating in enterprises, in agreement with the mechanisms of participation which have been instituted.

The degree of regional autonomy here is reduced to the capacity to influence indirectly, through organizations of a horizontal nature represented in various instances of the state apparatus (trade unions and employer associations, non-governmental organizations, socio-professional groups, "experts", etc.) the configuration of these activities, which must integrate consensual objectives.

ii) Curriculum planning

The curriculum planning aspect constitutes a first level of genuine autonomy (the first in centralized systems) on a regional scale in terms of vocational training, this autonomy being projected above all in the structure of the components of the training offered and in the actual courses into which this develops. However, this autonomy does not always extend to curricular aspects and to pedagogical contents, these being designed centrally, above all because of the requirements of recognition of the skills acquired, and subject to official certification.

Regional planning of vocational training ranges from institutionalized practices demonstrating a high regional involvement to forms of consultation with the protagonists organized on a regional scale to give them the opportunity of expressing opinions on the programmes conceived by training organizations.

In the first group, the most relevant exception is the case of France, where the existence of regional monitoring bodies for employment and training constitutes an instrument of both initial design and planning of the training offered, supplying strategic information such as evolution tendencies, prospects of employment and the development of professions, and of curriculum planning, structuring courses to correspond either to the demand manifested by enterprises, or to the prospective demand for professions. This allows the training system to integrate, in its offer, an anticipatory function regarding new qualifications.

The practical development of these levels of autonomy depends to a large extent either on the possibility of establishing information supports to assist the decision-making process (for both enterprises and organizations within the training system), or on a more profound process of negotiation (conflict vs cooperation) among the various regional partners in the search for a consensus to be concretized in the composition of the courses offered and the fields of training available. However, the construction of this consensus presupposes the existence of partners who are theoretically prepared and are capable of translating training objectives into concrete directions in terms of courses and vocational areas as well as in terms of broader training options (initial theoretical training, training at the workplace, alternance training, after-work training, etc. In this area there are strongly contrasting practices:

> training systems such as the Portuguese system, where the relationship between enterprises and training, for most of the entrepreneurial system

comes across either as the absence of relations or as a mere utilization of the offer of training made available by the Centres; this does not, however, invalidate the fact that there are, particularly in the metropolitan areas, large enterprises with training capacities which organize training activities, either internally or for the overall labour market, and which fulfil the technical and pedagogical conditions to participate in the elaboration of curricular contents and pedagogical materials, to train trainers and monitors, etc.;[26]

systems with a high index of corporate involvement, such as in France, where enterprises constitute the third vertex of a triangle which also includes the central government and the regions; this involvement comes across as strong activity in the areas of financing, curriculum planning, management and implementation of training activities.

iii) Financing

As we have already pointed out, the financing aspect constitutes a key element to establish and consolidate the autonomy and decision-making power of the regions in terms of vocational training. Although this issue has not been the object of systematic analysis in the context of the reports on the CEDEFOP Project case studies, it is possible to outline an overall panorama where mixed solutions tend to stand out:

training expenditure financed primarily by enterprises (French case): covering responsibility for internal training, transfers to training organizations and financial contributions destined to inter-corporate groups; the component of government financing is primarily linked to covering responsibilities associated with the local implementation of national vocational training activities (e.g., alternance training, programmes for high-risk groups, etc.);

financing primarily by regional authorities with powers and competences in terms of vocational training (the case of Great Britain, Italy and Spain); in their budgets, these regional "governments" manage funds affecting training, either initial or ongoing, transferred by the central government as overall financing instruments for programmes integrating national training activities or as a financial participation in activities of regional management integrated in more universal policy objectives;

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[26] This dualism, which derives partly from the fact that the entrepreneurial system is for the most part made up of small and very small enterprises without the means to organize their own training, demonstrates the importance of spreading on a regional level the idea of inter-cooperate training funds (for which there are, in fact, successful examples in some European countries), which, in addition to sensitizing enterprises for training, should play a mediating role between enterprises and training organizations.

predominantly government financing, a form associated with highly centralized training systems in which the state, through its protection organizations, is also responsible for initial design, curriculum planning and implementation of most of the activities; this is primarily the case in the Portuguese training system, where the Training Centres distributed throughout the country hardly correspond to the delegations of a public network of Centres, including Centres of Direct Management (strictly government-run) and Centres of Shared Management, conceived at the beginning of the eighties as instruments of cooperation between the government and the social partners, but in which the development of trade union structures is almost non-existent and the levels of participation in the co-financing of activities is located at 1 or 2 per cent. Furthermore, this dominance of government financing is formally associated to Community financial resources originating in the Econoconomic and Social Fund), with the maximum level of participation attributed to the regions of Objective 1.

However, the problem of financing vocational training, in spite of being an essential aspect of the assessment of the potential of regional systems and of the quality of the relationship established with regional economies, is not given sufficient attention, to the extent that in regions undergoing processes of reconversion or in decline (contexts 1 and 2 of Chart 3), vocational training is certainly an area where a larger dose of assistance is justified in view of the weakness of the regional systems (enterprises, associations, etc.).

iv) Training organizations

Our references to the organizational and functional aspects of vocational training are limited to the governmental and mixed network of Training Centres, not including training in enterprises with internal training programmes and training resources of their own.

The constant elements of the case studies reveal that this is the aspect where the levels of autonomy and decision-making power on a territorial scale are greatest and at the same time where various solutions of cooperation have been observed, involving either organizations specifically dedicated to training or organizations involved directly or indirectly with regional development.

In the area of equipment, units of the central governmental network predominate, but there are also facilities resulting from action taken by regional authorities within the scope of their management of resources earmarked for training. Also, and above all in poorer regions or in regions undergoing reconversion, we see the utilization of facilities which had previously been used otherwise (disused industrial premises, administrative buildings, etc.), examples of often locally-based cooperation of enterprises and other institutions (schools, non-governmental organizations, technological centres, etc.) with training organizations.

In terms of putting together training teams, there are rather different situations, notably the following:

- the existence of professionalized structures allowing the Centres, thus staffed, to provide the majority of modalities of training, qualification and improvement including theoretical and practical training;
- the existence of less official structures with a strong capacity for coordination and management in the areas of logistics and pedagogy and for the potential recruitment of trainers (above all in local institutions within the regular teaching system) and of monitors (made available by enterprises within the scope of cooperation agreements).

The consolidation of regional training systems benefits highly from the quality, stability and commitment of the training team, which constitutes a strategic element in the implementation of programmes and activities. Although the case studies made no significant references to this aspect, we can see the lack of systematic active participation of trainers and monitors in the phases of curriculum planning and definition of course contents, thus squandering the synergies which could result from the experience and knowledge of the members of the training team, who are called upon to collaborate in an irregular manner, and above all, only as consultants.

In the area of the mechanisms of information and vocational guidance, upstream from the actual training activities, most of the case studies reinforce the idea that on a regional level, the alliance between the instruments for the diffusion of information in the government-run employment and training service and the informal mechanisms (direct contacts, information sessions in schools, in associations, enterprises, etc.) ensures high levels of efficacy in the transmission of messages, particularly to target groups more reticent vis-à-vis specific programmes and training activities, as is the case, for instance, with the recruitment of young people for training in industrial professions.

v) Complementary activities

The existence of activities to complement training on a regional scale constitutes an element of strategic importance in the consolidation of the regional offer of vocational training. Indeed, the systematic production of relevant information (in terms of the results of training activities and the vocational insertion of graduates as well as the performance of the labour market, the evolution of training needs, the investment intentions of enterprises, the evolution of the expectations of young people, etc.) contributes decisively to the self-regulation of programmes and mechanisms of training, representing in this last area an element of support to decision-making regarding the reformulation of policies.

At the same time, setting up these activities represents a test of the cooperation between the various actors involved in the relationship between training and development, as we are dealing here with the establishment of a space for the sharing of strategic support information towards decision-making, which puts to the test the potentially distinct interests of enterprises and target groups of training, of training organizations on the market with competing alternative offers.

Here too we can see a strong disparity of situations showing the more or less decentralized character of the systems, the resources which can be mobilized to achieve the desired effect and the very objectives which the various parties involved intend to give to the measures complementing training.

In general, for the various systems there are bodies monitoring entry into active life which allow for complementation of the modalities of the professional insertion of young people leaving initial vocational training - a merely partial monitoring function, however - in spite of the importance of this aspect of the offer of vocational training - but above all there has been no evidence of a speedy solution which, at a useful time, would furnish instruments of support to the functions of reflection and strategic coordination of the Training Centres.

In more organized systems having a well-developed regional dimension - such as the French system, the establishment of regional bodies to monitor training / employment allows closer approximation / usefulness in terms of the identification of training needs, the adaptation of the profile of the courses offered, the readjustment of programme contents, etc.

In other cases, informal solutions tend to predominate, where it is the responsibility of the training organizations themselves to institute mechanisms of information gathering, either with regard to their activities or generically in terms of the labour market and the regional environment. From the point of view of consolidation of regional training systems, this solution is far from corresponding to the aim of the complementary activities, which are intended to produce information for generalized use by the regional actors, namely regarding the theoretical elements to support decision-making in terms of recruitment and qualification of human resources, but also regarding strategic information about behaviour vis-à-vis the market, the products, technologies, etc.

CHAPTER IV. EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN A TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

1. General observations

The analysis carried out in the previous points, showing specific dynamic forces which characterize the economic and vocational training sub-systems, just like the nature of their relationship itself and the intertwined stimuli which build up between the two, highlights a set of initial observations which support, as we see it, the strategic aspects of the structure of evaluation of training in a regional context.

A first observation tends to dispel rationalist concerns of finding universal models of evaluation vis-à-vis the various programmes and levels of intervention which would include the aspects of socially-based policies (specifically, the labour market, employment, vocational training and social security). Indeed, the evaluation of the impact of a policy can never be separated from the structure of the objectives which gave rise to it, nor from the modalities of concretization which it assumed in the past and in the present. In other words, the recommendations of reorientation (target groups, practical instruments of implementation, forms of transmission to the social system) must be strongly mediated by the framework of conditions and restrictions set by the political and administrative reference system.[27]

A second observation arises from the need to transform evaluation into a process of applied social research, keeping in mind that policies in the social sphere have specific formulation mechanisms in which particular interests and strategies tend to be concentrated: those of the public powers and of the social and economic partners. In other words, beyond the protagonists of the macro-decisions who establish, on the basis of political legitimacy, the principles of public action, there are other protagonists (the concrete social actors) who express their preferences in relation to different types of intervention under various forms (by formal representation, by claims, through lobbies).[28]

A third observation shows up the advantage of contextualizing the processes of evaluation within the territorial framework of the application of the measures or utilization of the policy instruments, given the omnipresence of the local / regional factors determining the behaviour patterns (accommodation / rejection / adaptation) of actors and target groups.

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[27] SCHARP, F.W., Formulazione delle politiche e implementazione. Problemi ed aprocci, De Donato, Bari, 1981, p. 275-287

[28] LIPARI, Domenico, "la valutazione delle azioni pubbliche", in Il Progetto, no. 49, 1989.

In other words, vis-à-vis the multiplicity and variety of actors involved (officials, technicians and officers of the central administration and of its decentralized organizations at a local and regional level; managers, technicians, promoters and trainers working at the local level of the public employment services; enterprises, workers, pensioners, subsidized persons, etc.) it is necessary, in terms of the objectives of evaluation, to introduce a frame of reference to recreate and consensualize various logics and interests vis-à-vis the manifestations / modalities of materialization of the programmes / social policies, "lato sensu".

A fourth and last observation is associated with the need to see the evaluation of public policies, either in the sphere of social intervention or in the economic and regional area, in terms of the establishment of a prospective framework at the level of the formulation mechanisms for the strategies of both passive and active participants, strategies which (re)adjust themselves either in view of the sometimes contradictory evolution of the social and economic variables, or vis-à-vis the potentialities derived from socio-economic change. This need stems from the advantage gained by establishing in the behaviour of the decision-makers regular mechanisms of re-adaptation in the formulation of programmes and instruments directed to the target groups of social policy.

2. Strategic aspects of the structuring of evaluation processes for vocational training in a territorial context

Towards the end of the eighties the OECD carried out an investigation which gathered together the contributions of various specialists as well as reports about experiences in the Member Countries, centred on the evaluation of policies and instruments oriented towards government assistance in employment and other social measures[29] ; this study's subtitle underscores the complex dimension of the work (studies and projects) in terms of evaluation in the actual phase. The report which presents the results of these studies and debates is organized around the answers to four questions formulated simply and directly:

- what to evaluate? (what subjects interest the decision-makers);
- how to evaluate? (to what purpose);
- when to evaluate? (at what opportunity);

29 OECD, L´évaluation des programmes pour l´emploi et des mesures sociales; le point sur une question complexe, 1991, Paris.

- who evaluates? (what body should carry out evaluation and on what level should results be made public).

These questions summarize the essential points involved in terms of evaluation and their degree of elaboration has the advantage of clarifying for the persons or groups responsible for the processes the object of evaluation as well as the scope and interest of evaluation initiatives.

Keeping in mind how to approach the methodological aspects of the framework chapter (Chapter I), this point is intended to systematize a complex of reflections into a perspective suitable to putting concepts and procedures into operation.

It is therefore interesting for the objectives of this chapter to adjust these questions to the condition of the strategic aspects structuring the evaluation of vocational training in a territorial context:

i) objectives of the evaluation process;
ii) methods and procedures of evaluation;
iii) evaluative agents;
iv) timing of the evaluation process.

2.1. Objectives of the evaluation process

Setting up processes of evaluation in vocational training must be a response to the need for support instruments for the decision-makers and protagonists of training, with the concept of training being taken in a broad sense (public policy, training mechanisms, programmes and activities).

At a territorial level it is important to know exactly what the object of evaluation really is, because this can be training mechanisms with their own internal coherence (objectives, organizational resources, etc.) just as well as training programmes and activities merely projecting into the regional area the implementation level of training policies and mechanisms with a national scope.

This knowledge presupposes a "cycle of research necessary for the determination of the objectives of evaluation"[30], which must produce information relative to the aspects of initial design of policies as well as of curriculum planning for courses and vocational areas existing at a regional level and the modalities of decision-making in the context of the relationship

30 Cf. PEDROSO, Paulo, "A avaliaçao das políticas de formaçao como processo de investigaçao", in Emprego e Formaçao, no. 18, (I.E.F.P.), Lisbon, May 1992.

between promoters and users of training. This preliminary study, as broad as justified by the dimension of the regional expressions of training, must permit the incorporation into the process of evaluation of both the knowledge of objectives (the formulation of which is most often the result of long negotiations between public authorities and other protagonists and the target groups) and information on the competences, interests and expectations which the various actors associate with the concept of training.

From the point of view of the structure of the evaluation process, this is a crucial moment to the extent that a confrontation is established between the perspectives of the agents of evaluation (founded in their own concepts tested on the basis of the empirical object of the preliminary research) and the perspectives of the bodies which take the initiative of evaluation.

The output of this confrontation of perspectives should be the construction of a frame of reference for evaluation which structures the strategic areas which are the object of examination, such as:

- the determination of needs which form the basis for the training system: the socio-economic context; the projected expectations and pressures of the various regional social and economic partners on the offer of training;
- the technical aspects of training: financing conditions, curricular and pedagogical organizational mechanisms; coordination, management and implementation structures; complementary instruments;
- the production of effects on the target groups (production of competence, evolution of the levels of vocational insertion, etc.).

2.2. Methods and procedures of evaluation

In accordance with the notes put forward in the methodological aspects of Chapter I, we can distinguish three basic types of evaluation:

- "evaluation of results", oriented towards establishing the degree of realization of the objectives;
- "mise en oeuvre evaluation", oriented towards establishing the levels of efficacy of the management of programmes and activities;
- "interactive evaluation", oriented towards the production of levels of knowledge about the best solutions for the development of training policies and practices.

This typology corresponds to Chart 2 from the British report, which links these types of evaluation to the nature of the actors involved and to the objectives they follow according to the following grid:

Chart 5
Relationship between types of evaluation / actors / objectives of evaluation

Types of evaluation	Actors	Objectives
Evaluation of results	Protection organizations Financing agents	Performance of agents involved
"Mise en oeuvre" evaluation	Bodies responsible for management Training Centres	Instrument of support for management (levels of execution, efficacy of utilization of resources)
"Interactive" evaluation	The actors involved	Reformulation of training policies and programmes; shaping of objectives in relation to promotion of development

From a practical point of view, carrying out these types of evaluation presupposes the existence of information relative to the empirical object - the training process, its forms of development, the results attained in relation to the objectives aimed at by the various actors - information of a quantitative and qualitative nature for which indicators have been constructed. The indicators must be designed so as to match the objectives and take into account criteria of evaluation which correspond to the modalities of the relationship between training and development at a regional level, specifically:

- the effects of training in terms of access to employment (the percentage of graduates employed locally in permanent jobs);
- the effects of training on vocational reconversion (the volume of unemployed locally employed in new professions);
- the extent to which the training offer satisfies the needs of the productive system and of the target groups (the evolution of the frequency of training activities and the flows of recruitment originating at a supra-local level).

However, the evaluation of results often faces obstacles, for example:

- the difficulty of isolating objectives in the training programmes which, for the most part, correspond to a variety of interdependent objectives;

- the difficulty of evaluating consequences of training which are visible only in the medium or long term (effects on the modernization of enterprises and their competitiveness, on the overall qualifications of human resources in the region, and the impact on attraction of investment, etc.).

The use of a combination of quantitative methods (practicable with measurable objectives) and qualitative methods (such as questionnaires, case studies, etc.) is the most commonly used solution to overcome these constraints.

It is important to note that a "mise en oeuvre" type of evaluation, which is of a more institutional character, develops within the framework of the day-to-day management of programmes and must allow the measurement of the immediate effects of a programme (resources and types of participants, management modes, characteristics of training, dysfunctions and inefficiencies) by furnishing indicators of results in relation to objectives to those responsible for these programmes. Making certain that, with this content, this type of evaluation does not stray from complementary procedures on a regional level, "mise en oeuvre" evaluation can have a strategic importance to the extent that it allows to proceed to the examination of modalities of cooperation between institutions, enterprises and associations, trade unions and workers, local communities (non-governmental organizations, communities, etc.) involved in either training processes or the promotion of regional development, playing distinct roles in the processes of financial decision-making, in the implementation of training activities, etc. Levels of participation (a central role, consultancy, utilization, etc.) in these processes, being factors in the consolidation of regional systems, can perfectly well be the object of analysis in the framework of this type of evaluation, which can also provide socio-economic information and other information utilized by the various actors in their corporate activities, training activities, etc.

This last aspect allows us to illustrate a conclusion already pointed out and which stands out when reading the reports furthest ahead in the methodological aspects of evaluation of training in a territorial context:

even though interactive evaluation may be the best suited to the examination of the relationship between training and development, neither evaluation of results nor "mise en oeuvre" evaluation are unimportant; indeed, it reinforces the need for complementation and synergy so as to produce evaluation material usable for the

reformulation of policies and for more interaction between training and development and between demand and supply of qualifications.

2.3. Agents of evaluation

One of the issues involved in the processes of evaluation is the question of knowing who has the legitimacy to initiate evaluation. This is a problem which is far from being solved, particularly when taking into account the potential of use of results.

There are a variety of solutions ranging from evaluations being carried out by government bodies and evaluations entrusted to external consultants. We also know of examples of organizations of independent character with tripartite representation from the government, the employers and trade unions, who carry out evaluations in the social area.

Some other authors establish a classification of agents of evaluation, making a distinction between an instance having political legitimacy and a technical instance[31]. In this classification, the first instance takes the political initiative of promoting and following the process of evaluation and interpreting the material of evaluation in accordance with its priorities of intervention whereas the second develops the evaluation through the exercise of its technical competence, producing elements of study and knowledge as well as recommendations regarding the object of evaluation.

In this process, the determining factor - and this is even more so at a regional level in view of the profusion of actors involved and the proximity to the empirical object - is to ensure a democratic process on the basis of a broader public debate (starting from the manifestation of differing interests and values). The processes of internal or closed evaluation can guarantee a greater efficacy in the logic of the decision-makers, but they represent a strong temptation to protect the object of evaluation, the policies or training programmes, and avoid confrontation with innovative perspectives.

From the point of view of interactive evaluation, it is indispensable to ensure levels of technical and political dialogue so as to allow an evolution towards levels of consensus, between approximations of a more academic character (those of investigators) and concerns derived from the intrinsic priorities of decision-makers. On a regional plane the concretization of evaluation processes with this conceptual matrix depends on the solidity of existing or future networks; this is, surely, one of the points of greater uncertainty, given the fact that there is still a long road to go, starting with sensitization to the objectives and the indispensability of evaluation.

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31 Cf. the distinction made by VIVERET, Patrick, L´évaluation des politiques et des actions publiques, 1989, Paris, La Documentation Française.

2.4. Timing of the evaluation process

The success of evaluation processes depends to a large extent on the production and timely availability of results, corresponding to a criterion of utility in the perspective of the decision-makers and other potential users of the results of evaluation.

There are two conditions which must be come together to accomplish this aim:

- the first regards the adoption of procedures of evaluation from the phase of initial design, not only to ensure the effective implementation of evaluation but also keeping in mind the regular production of information on the evolution of the results of the programme, which facilitates adjustments / corrections on an ongoing basis (various organizations, in English-speaking countries, now use this procedure);
- a second regards the necessity of ensuring continuity for evaluation procedures, keeping in mind the temporal nature of the effects of training programmes on the target groups and the socio-economic environment.

In the OECD study quoted above, most specialists defend the advantage of implementing demonstration studies as contents of the first phase of evaluation procedures, linked to the functions of training programme design and curriculum planning (and of other social policies, such as employment policies). This is particularly justified in view of the reduction of political risks for the responsible agents and government executors of programmes (risks which grow for programmes undergoing evaluation) and in view of the anticipation of the effects of programmes before they are launched.[33]

In this perspective - utilization of the elements furnished by evaluation for the configuration of programmes and allocation of resources - everything contributing to enrich the upstream function represents an increased potential for the various protagonists and users of the training system, which presupposes, specifically, the construction of adequate supportive measures in terms of information, indispensable help for the development of studies which incorporate the process of evaluation.

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[33] Nathan, R. "Stratégies d'évaluation mettant l'accent sur les études de démonstration", in L'évaluation des programmes pour l'emploi et des mesures sociales: le point sur une question complexe, OECD, 1991, Paris

2.5. Synthesis of evaluation of training in a territorial context

The following chart summarizes the strategic elements which must be taken into account in the components of study which integrate the process of evaluation identifying, vis-à-vis a complex of areas, the levels and questions of evaluation to be considered in a regional perspective.

Chart 6

Analytical grid for the evaluation of training in a territorial context

	Areas of evaluation	Levels of evaluation in a regional perspective	Dimensions of evaluation of training in a regional context
PROCESS OF COMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION	1. Formulation of policies and instruments of vocational training	• Spatial implementation of the objectives of training policies and instruments • Integration of vocational training into regional development policies	• Vocational training as seen by the various actors • Importance of effective offer of vocational training in the promotion of regional development
	2. Initial design of vocational training programmes	• Degree of utilization of activities to identify training needs in enterprises • Degree of utilization of information regarding employment market and regional economic environment	• Modalities of identification of demand for training • Forms of adjustment of training demand / supply • Utilization of instruments supporting decision-making
	3. Activities implementing programmes and actions	• Autonomy of local management and implementation structures • Coherence of training models vis-à-vis user characteristics • "Mise en oeuvre" evaluation	• Typology of actors affecting the functioning of the offer of vocational training • Complementary activities and structures of coordination of training at a regional level
	4. Modalities of institutional cooperation	• Mechanisms instituted to ensure regional integration of the various actors • Competences and autonomy of regional instances in the context of the vocational training system	• Levels of cooperation between the actors of vocational training / regional development: areas of intervention, modalities and limitations • Strategies of cooperation within and among regions
	5. Internal information mechanisms	• Regional system of social and economic information • Integration of evaluation criteria in the perspective of the relationship between training and regional development • Evaluation of results	• Correspondence between training offered and need for qualifications in the regional economic system • Instruments of decision-making support for the bodies of the economic and training subsystems

Source: adapted from the report by the Portuguese team

CHAPTER V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The CEDEFOP Project for the evaluation of vocational training in a territorial context, by the fact of bringing together six Member States of the European Community, accepted to follow a route which was not without risks, as the characteristics of the training activities in the various territorial contexts have an existence of their own in relation to the policy options that were at their origin, in relation to the profile of the actors locally involved in training activities, to the target groups the programmes are intended to reach, to the interests and expectations projected on the offer of training as an aspect of regional development. Meanwhile, distinct practices and methodologies are also being adopted, as has been happening in a number of countries still going through the first steps in this topic.

It is not surprising, then, that an appreciable number of approaches have resulted from the studies conducted within the scope of the CEDEFOP Project, corresponding to the theoretical and methodological reference frames of the various teams and, above all, to the nature of the relationship between vocational training and regional development and to the depth of the complementary activities and activities of evaluation already in place. In terms of the formulation of a frame of reference for evaluation, most of the teams come close, however, to the systemic approach suggested in the initial terms of reference of the CEDEFOP Project, even though they reconsider this approach under various angles of analysis, confirming it, however, as appropriate to the objectives of permitting the deduction of forms of intervention, of modalities of cooperation and conflict and of levels of internal and external interaction between sub-systems (economic and training).

The studies carried out reinforce a number of recommendations which have been presented by various investigators and bodies responsible for processes of evaluation of government policies of a social, sectoral or regional character, which can be summarized in the following aspects:

i) **Institutionalization of social and economic information systems on a regional basis**
[(giving the regions support instruments for the management of the interface between training and development with various intermediate objectives:

- information on the labour market and evolution of jobs, vocational competences and prerequisites for qualification as a supportive measure for corporate decision-making in terms of recruiting and training and as a support for the elaboration of programmes (courses and vocational areas);
- information on current changes either in terms of regional measures, actions and projects, or of the local impact of measures, actions and projects on a general scale (sectoral programmes, for instance).]

Putting these systems into operation can assume the form of a permanent monitoring body to observe the strategic areas of the relationship between vocational training and regional development, namely:

- regional social and economic structure
- growing dynamic forces (investment and innovation)
- policies and programmes affecting regional development (both local and exogenous in their origin)
- regulation of the labour market
- scholastic training in technology and vocational training (equipment, components of offer, levels of adjustment or maladjustment of supply and demand, modes of insertion of young people into active life)
- evolution of job contents, vocational profiles and prospective qualifications.

ii) **Institutionalization of systematic processes of evaluation as a support instrument for planning vocational training**
(Implementing this strategic principle presupposes the existence of the information supports mentioned above and the use of a monitoring body as central place of examination of the coherence of the social and economic processes associated to the relationship between training and development. The production of the information referred to allows the support of a complementary function - linked to the control of the use and efficient management of material and human resources - but above all the support of the evaluation function in its different moments: "ex-ante", ongoing and "ex-post".

This complex of information regarding ongoing transformations - which permits anticipation of the sense and effects of socio-economic change - together with the information regarding the impacts produced by the various policies at a territorial level, represents a strategic instrument for the formulation of training programmes at a regional level and can guarantee the participation and involvement of the various regional actors in the production

of information, the establishment of a consensus of objectives right from the outset in terms of objectives, components of the offer of training, structure of mobilizable resources and expectable modalities of cooperation.

From this point of view, planning evaluation operations in vocational training, right from the initial phase of training initiatives, constitutes a key recommendation.[33]

iii) **Integration of instruments and measures of vocational training policy into operational programmes oriented towards the promotion of regional development**
(The regional dynamic forces are the result of effects from various sources which in terms of policy interventions mean the joint effect of programmes of regional or national character run with Community support. This means that at a regional level there is a large number of interventions which are not always coherent and often involve dispersion and / or waste of resources. From the point of view of evaluation, the absence of strategic rationality in these interventions makes it difficult to set up processes to monitor and measure impacts and ultimately renders more complex the deduction of a reference frame and evaluation criteria. In this perspective, the formulation of policies with a regional impact according to concepts of coherence of objectives, instruments and resources to be involved, can translate into significant gains in terms of both the promotion of regional development and the reinforcement of the control capacity of the various administrative instances involved.).

In terms of the problems of evaluation, the results of the studies and content of the discussions held among the six national teams suggest a coherent set of recommendations oriented to the **reinforcement of the evaluation function in a territorial context:**

a) **the promotion of the development of technical evaluation structures at a regional level,** to be responsible among other aspects for the strategic coordination of the social and economic information systems, for the evaluation operations - "mise en oeuvre" and results - and for the elaboration of basic opinions regarding planning the offer of training; these structures should benefit from the contribution of external consultants;

33 cf. Report of the TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE, op. cit., p. 20 (EN).

b) **the promotion of the constitution of a network of experiences of evaluation,** both in course and future, taking into the plurality of practices and theoretical references and with the objective of strengthening the levels of knowledge and methods of evaluation;

c) **the creation of a European Training Programme for Technicians of Evaluation,** with the objective of producing professionals qualified for the development of evaluation operations.

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